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January 23, 2020

Postal Regulatory Commission
Re: Docket Number: RM2017-3
901 New York Avenue NW
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

Dear Commission Members,

Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County provides food and nutrition to nearly 20% of Santa Cruz County's population. This means that monthly, 55,000 people receive fresh produce, pantry staples and other items needed to thrive. We do this by providing food, at no cost, to over 100 non profit partners in Santa Cruz County as well as hosting nearly 90 of our own nutrition distribution programs.

Without our services, thousands of families would have to make the critical choices about providing food or heating their homes or buying medicine. Individuals would suffer the consequences of malnutrition and their employers would suffer from absenteeism as well as higher insurance premiums.

We know the link between nutrition and education. Children in our county schools would not have access to the free snack programs and be unable to focus during classes to take full advantage of their learning opportunities.

The Food Bank is able to do this because of our incredible purchasing power and our extremely low overhead. We are able to provide an individual with a healthy meal for just \$.25. That means for every \$1 donated, we can provide 5 pounds of food to our community.

Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County relies on direct mail to raise the funds needed to provide food to 55,000 people monthly. However, that does come at a price. The new tax laws that went into effect for 2018 seriously curtailed philanthropic giving in high tax rate states like California. Which meant that we had to reduce services and staffing levels.

An increase in non profit postage would add an additional burden on not only the Food Bank, but the other non profits in the area that are working to make Santa Cruz a livable county.

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Santa Cruz is considered the world's forth least affordable place to live according to <http://blog.sfgate.com/ontheblock/2017/12/13/santa-cruz-county-fourth-least-affordable-real-estate-in-the-world>

Knowing that, there is great need in our community as well as a challenge to fundraising in such an expensive place to live. Increasing the cost of non profit mailing will dramatically increase our fundraising and acquisition costs. This will, in fact, impact the amount of food and services that we can provide.

When your organization is looking at every quarter it raises as one meal out in the community, even a couple of cents increase on mailing costs will have a negative impact. We need the help of the Postal Regulatory Commission to keep non profit mailing costs low. For every quarter increase Second Harvest pays, that's one less meal for the 55,000 at risk community members in Santa Cruz County.

Please, help us feed hope, help us make Santa Cruz County an equitable and healthy community for all.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Willis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suzanne Willis
Chief Development Officer